REMARKS

Claims 40-51 and 54-58 were pending in this application when the present office action was mailed on September 5, 2008. In this response, claims 41 and 51 have been amended. Claim 59 has been added and claim 55 has been canceled. Accordingly, claims 40-51, 54 and 56-59 are currently pending.

Summary of Office Action

In the Final Office Action mailed on September 5, 2008, claims 40-51 and 54-58 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNelley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,550,754) in view of Olofsson (U.S. Patent No. 4,380,024).

Summary of Amendments

Claim 40 has been amended to further include "compressing portions of the first set of visual data with one of multiple levels of compression," where the level of compression varies "based on the level of interest indicated by the predetermined meaning." Claim 51 and new claim 59 include similar features. Support for the amendments may be found at least in paragraph 242 of the specification.

Discussion of Rejections

Applicants respectfully submit that the references fail to disclose "associating a predetermined meaning with the marked specified time, wherein the predetermined meaning indicates a level of interest" and "compressing portions of the . . . visual data" using multiple levels of compression, where the level of compression varies "based on the level of interest indicated by the predetermined meaning," as included in amended claim 1.

McNelly discloses a video phone and answering machine that can store a video recording of an outgoing message and additional recordings of any messages received from callers. See McNelly, col. 11, ln. 60 and after. The video recordings in McNelly may be compressed or uncompressed. See McNelly, col. 18, lines 29-48. However, as stated in the Office Action, McNelly fails to disclose marking a specified time and associating a predetermined meaning with the specified time.

Olofsson was cited to fill this gap. Olofsson discloses a system for recording video in an aircraft. See Olofsson, Abstract. The system combines data from an aircraft camera with data from the aircraft's Head Up Display (HUD) to create and store a composite video. See Olofsson, Abstract. The Olofsson system is thus able to show everything that the pilot sees without placing a camera directly in front of the pilot. See Olofsson, col. 1, lines 25-35. To do so, the Olofsson system uses a video synthesizer 29 to convert HUD data to a video format. See Olofsson, Figure 5, col. 4, lines 25-29. A video multiplexer 30 combines the recorded video with the synthesized video to generate an output video that is stored by a video cassette recorder 31. See Olofsson, Figure 5, col. 4, lines 29-40.

However, the Olofsson system only uses the HUD data to provide a video stream to the video multiplexer 30. Olofsson neither teaches nor suggests compressing portions of the video using variable levels of video compression "wherein the level of compression used at the marked specified time is based on the level of interest indicated by the predetermined meaning," among other limitations. McNelly also fails to disclose these aspects of claim 1. Thus, for at least these reasons, applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1.

Independent claim 51 includes features generally analogous to those discussed above with reference to claim 40 and dependent claims 42-50, 54, and 56-58 depend from claim 40. Accordingly, the Section 103 rejections of claims 42-51, 54, and 56-58

should be withdrawn for at least the foregoing reasons and for the additional features of these claims.

The reasons discussed above apply to new claim 59, as well. Neither McNelly nor Olofsson discloses, among other limitations, "compressing the . . . first portion of the first set of visual data using a first level of compression, wherein the first level of compression used is based on the first level of importance" and "compressing the . . . second portion of the first set of visual data using a second level of compression" that differs from the first level, "wherein the second level of compression used is based on the second level of importance." Thus, applicants respectfully submit that claim 59 should also be allowed for at least the reasons discussed above.
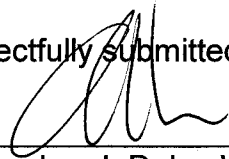
Overall, none of the applied references, singly or in any motivated combination, disclose or suggest at least i) variable levels of compression, ii) associated with differing levels of importance in shared video, in combination with other elements of the independent claims, and thus those claims are allowable. Since the independent claims are allowable, based on at least the above reasons, the claims which depend from them are likewise allowable. If the applicant has overlooked a relevant teaching in any of the references, the Examiner is requested to point out specifically where such teaching may be found.

In view of the foregoing, the claims pending in the application comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112 and patentably define over the applied art. A Notice of Allowance is, therefore, respectfully requested. If the Examiner has any questions or believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is encouraged to call the undersigned at (206) 359-3599.

Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 50-0665, under Order No. 345288015US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: _12/22/08_

Respectfully submitted,

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